

5 What is claimed is:

1. An energy-absorbing barrier system, comprising: a first impact panel adapted to be overlappable with one like itself and attachable to a barrier; and a first crushable member adapted to be positioned between the first impact panel and the barrier when the first impact panel is attached to the barrier.

10 2. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, further comprising: the first crushable member further adapted to be at least partially crushed between the first impact panel and the barrier when:

the first impact panel is attached to the barrier;

the first crushable member is positioned between the first impact panel and the

15 barrier; and

the impact panel is impacted sufficiently to deflect the first impact panel against the first crushable member.

3. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 2, further comprising: a second impact panel adapted to be overlappable with the first impact panel, the second impact panel attachable to the barrier, the first impact panel adapted to at least partially overlap the second impact panel when the first impact panel and the second impact panel are overlappingly attached to the barrier.

4. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 3, further comprising: a second crushable member adapted to be positioned between the second impact panel and the barrier when the second impact panel is attached to the barrier, and to be at least partially crushed between the second impact panel and the barrier when:

5 the first impact panel and the second impact panel are overlappingly attached to the barrier;

the second crushable member is positioned between the second impact panel and the barrier; and

10 the first impact panel is impacted sufficiently to deflect the first impact panel against the second impact panel sufficiently to deflect the second impact panel against the second crushable member.

5. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, further comprising: the first impact panel attached to the barrier.

6. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 5, further comprising: the first crushable member positioned between the first impact panel and the barrier.

7. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, further comprising: the first impact panel attached to the barrier; and a second impact panel adapted to be overlappable with the first impact panel, the second impact panel attached to the barrier, and the first impact panel at least partially overlapping the second impact panel.

20 8. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 7, further comprising: the first crushable member positioned between the first impact panel and the barrier.

9. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 8, further comprising: a second crushable member positioned between the second impact panel and the barrier.

10. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, wherein the first impact panel
25 is adapted to be impacted by a motor vehicle.

11. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, wherein the barrier comprises a guard rail.

5 12. The energy-absorbing barrier system of claim 1, wherein the barrier comprises
a race track wall.

13. An impact panel, comprising: a first portion defining a barrier-adjacent surface and a first impact surface opposite the barrier-adjacent surface, the first portion extending longitudinally from a first proximal region to a first distal region, the first distal region attached with a second proximal region of a second portion, the second portion defining a first non-barrier-adjacent surface and a second impact surface opposite the first non-barrier-adjacent surface, the second portion extending longitudinally from the second proximal region to a second distal region and away from and non-parallel to the barrier-adjacent surface, the second distal region attached with a third proximal region of a third portion, the third portion defining a second non-barrier-adjacent surface and a third impact surface opposite the second non-barrier-adjacent surface, the third portion extending longitudinally from the third proximal region to a third distal region and substantially parallel to the barrier-adjacent surface.

14. The impact panel of claim 13, further comprising: the first plate defining one or more fastener holes for fastening the impact panel to a barrier.

15. The impact panel of claim 13, further comprising: a pliant fastening system adapted to pliably fasten the impact panel to a barrier, including pliable material adapted to be placed between the impact panel and the barrier, and a fastener adapted to fasten the pliable material between the impact panel and the barrier.

25 16. The impact panel of claim 13, wherein the impact panel is formed at least partially from steel.

17. A method of absorbing impact energy, comprising the steps of:

5 impacting a first impact panel of an energy-absorbing barrier system that comprises
the first impact panel adapted to be overlappable with one like itself, the first impact panel
attached to a barrier and a first crushable member positioned between the first impact panel
and the barrier;

deflecting the first impact panel against the first crushable member; and
10 at least partially crushing the first crushable member.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising the steps of:

deflecting the first impact panel against a second impact panel adapted to be
overlappable with the first impact panel, the second impact panel attached to the barrier
overlappingly with the first impact panel.

15 19. The method of claim 18 further comprising the steps of:

at least partially crushing a second crushable member positioned between the second
impact panel and the barrier.